



NOW THEN

ALISON LAMBERT | GEORGE MONBIOT | AKALA
A MAGAZINE FOR SHEFFIELD | ISSUE 85 | FREE



NOW THEN

IS A **FREE**, **INDEPENDENT** MAGAZINE PUBLISHED IN **SHEFFIELD** AND **MANCHESTER**. IT IS ALL ABOUT **SUPPORTING INDEPENDENCE IN ART**, **TRADE** AND **CITIZEN JOURNALISM**. **LOCAL PEOPLE ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO CONTRIBUTE** AND EACH MAGAZINE INCLUDES **ARTWORK FROM A DIFFERENT FEATURED ARTIST**.

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EDITORIAL

We've been really pleased with attendance at Festival of Debate events so far. Owen Jones and Shami Chakrabarti drew big crowds at the SU, but the more grassroots, community discussions have also been popular and really productive. It's great to see so many people engaged in important topics that affect them ahead of the General Election on 7 May. There's plenty more to come before that though, including writer and activist George Monbiot at the SU on 16 April (interview on page 10) and rapper Akala at Plug on 30 April (interview on page 40). Find festival listings on page 7 and at festivalofdebate.com.

Believe it or not, this is our 7th birthday issue. Thanks to everyone who has worked with us in any capacity over the years. Long may it continue. We've got one of our favourite past featured artists, Alison Lambert, back this month. Read our interview with her on page 30. Her work continues to amaze us, four years on from her first appearance in NT#39.

SAM
sam@nowthenmagazine.com

Our world is increasingly unequal, characterised by apathy, disconnection and the interests of the few. We can do better.

Now Then is a platform for independent art, trade, music, writing and local news.

It's about supporting the things that make a community what it is – creativity, cooperation, collaboration, conscience and consciousness.

Anyone can contribute to the magazine both online and off, remotely and in person, in support or in opposition - the discussion is what matters.

We want you to write for Now Then. Get involved.

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Cover image: Zeno, 2013

NOW THEN 85, APRIL 2015

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Evolutionprint



SHOWROOM
WORKSTATION
SHEFFIELD



Nyah, 2014

LOCALCHECK

KEEPING IT REAL

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These words are written in order to explain things which can't be summed up in a simple slogan. It's more complicated and I need to explain. Please read on.

Activists from Sheffield and elsewhere attended a recent conference in Manchester, announcing the launch in April of a new UK news service, Real Media, which aims to challenge mainstream outlets. With honourable exceptions like Now Then, media ownership is very concentrated. Three quarters of the UK press is owned by just five billionaires who influence the public discourse with selected agendas. This matters, because people develop attitudes based on media messages. Much of what we read originates in sources ranging from right-wing 'think tanks' through to Hollywood advertisers. Information is deliberately left out, distorted and biased, aimed at selling, persuading, shocking, or simply obscuring the truth. Many people don't know we face a potential crisis combining deadly climate change, resource shortages, mass refugee movements, economic collapse, military aggression, and powerful elite takeovers through covert trade agreements. Interested in the latest celebrity gossip? Me neither.

Look out for Real Media. It will include grassroots and independent writing from all over Britain, Sheffield included. Ordinary people explaining how life is affecting them, in their own words. Perhaps you could do this too. What's your perspective? Words are important to explain facts and ideas. You're reading some now. Will they change your life? Perhaps not, but there's always that possibility.

For example, on 16 May the annual Sheffield Anarchist Bookfair sets up its stall in the Showroom Workstation. Visitors, sellers and speakers from around Britain roll up for one of the city's friendliest political events. Forget whatever you may think about the spiky name 'anarchist'. There's a whole evolving growth of libertarian understandings - politics based on freedom beyond

the capitalist version of 'freedom of choice' - without a greasy politician in sight. Instead, it's books explaining ideas through words. There are usually film showings, meetings and an after party too.

Meanwhile, another outlet for publications is under attack. Rare and Racy bookshop is a Sheffield alternative institution. It's one of the unique places that brought me to the city. As well as masses of second-hand books, they sell radical and self-published works. You don't get that in Waterstones.

Now there's a battle raging over the future of Devonshire Street. Primesite UK want to demolish three of the oldest shops in the city. In their place a characterless new building, proportioned for profit, would see Rare and Racy and two other independent businesses priced out of the area. Despite a 19,000 signature petition and over 800 written objections, the Council approved the application last month. Hopes now hang on goodwill from the owner or a legal challenge which could encourage the owner to sell.

Independent and locally-owned, non-corporate organisations are the lifeblood of a place. They're worth fighting for. Paying attention to the mass media can feel like watching non-stop adverts, without any meaningful or trustworthy content. It's like walking around Meadowhall, depressed, thinking: What's it all for? On the other hand, giving your time and attention to real grassroots events, organisations and publications like Now Then is massively important to them, and to your mental health and sense of belonging. Support and value what you've got before it gets crushed.

realmedia.press | rareandracy.co.uk
sheffieldbookfair.org.uk | alt-sheff.org

SHARROW LANTERN CARNIVAL

12 APRIL | 7:30PM | MOUNT PLEASANT PARK

This beautiful mini-festival of creative action returns to Planet Sheffield with 'Life on Earth' as this year's theme. It starts as dusk gathers in Mount Pleasant Park for a procession of homemade lanterns towards a sparkling celebration in the General Cemetery. creativeaction.net

SHEFFIELD ENVIRONMENT WEEKS

ONGOING | ACROSS SHEFFIELD AND NORTH DERBYSHIRE

Sheffield is ahead of the curve in celebrating the environment. For over three decades, the annual Environment Weeks have invited people to learn and experience nature close up, whether with sleeves rolled up or just enjoying the fresh air. A full calendar of events is online. sheffieldenvironment.org



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FESTIVAL OF DEBATE

THE DEBATE CONTINUES

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The Festival of Debate has been a real success so far, but it's not over yet – we've got events running right through till the end of April.

You can find the full programme at festivalofdebate.com, but here's a sample. Most events are free, but please register online ahead of time if possible. For disabled access or any questions, contact us on hello@festivalofdebate.com.

THE ALTERNATIVES TO AUSTERITY

Sat 11 Apr | 7-9pm | Union St

An open discussion with a panel of experts explores the alternatives to austerity. Audience members invited to contribute before voting on their top ten policy ideas.

HOW TO BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN

Mon 13 Apr | 7pm | Union St

'Active citizen' Nigel Slack is on a mission to find out how decisions are made at Sheffield City Council – who has the power, what they do with it, and how we, as citizens, can influence their decisions. An 'in conversation' event with extensive Q&A.

COMMUNITY MEDIA: INDEPENDENT, LOCAL, ALTERNATIVE

Tues 14 Apr | 7:30-9pm | Union St

A round-table discussion on independently-owned community media, with representatives from Now Then, SilenceBreaker Media, Sheffield Live and more TBC.

COMMON PEOPLE: PUBLIC SERVICES, SPACES & PROGRESS

Weds 15 Apr | 6pm | Union St

Panellists reflect on how we can reclaim public spaces and services, followed by an open discussion. Featuring Morag Rose, Ian Cole, Sarah Blandy, Desiree Fields and Tom Moore

GEORGE MONBIOT

Thurs 16 Apr | 7pm | SU Auditorium

Award-winning author and journalist speaks about the concept of 'rewilding' – giving up our control of the countryside and letting nature thrive once again. Tickets £8.25 (£6.60 concs) from su.sheffield.ac.uk.

DEVOLUTION WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM POLITICIANS

Sat 18 Apr | 2-4pm | Union St

A workshop and open discussion about devolution of power to local government. Talk and come up with ideas about how to start 'doing devolution' from the bottom up as soon as you leave the room.

CANVAS OF VOICES

Mon 20 Apr | 5:30-7:30pm | The Church Of St James and St Christopher

Tues 21 Apr | 5:30-7:30pm | Terminus Cafe

A short film by Gemma Thorpe, Canvas of Voices is about young people in Sheffield and their engagement in politics. Followed by a chaired debate about the topic.

ANIMAL FARM

21-25 Apr | 7:45pm | Theatre Delicatessen

Orwell's masterpiece performed in the abandoned Woolworths on the Moor? Yes please. Tickets on the door. £8/£7 concessions/£12 family (2 adults, 2 children). Additional matinee (4pm) on 25 April.

SHEFFIELD'S MANIFESTO FOR A FEMINIST GOVERNMENT

Sat 25 Apr | 1-3pm | Theatre Delicatessen

Sheffield's Feminist Manifesto is a chance to create a list of demands for a fair and equal society. Manifesto drawn together at the end from audience contributions. In partnership with LaDIYfest Sheffield.

CLOSING PARTY FEAT. AKALA

Thurs 30 Apr | 7:30pm | Plug

Socially conscious rapper, poet and journalist helps us celebrate the end of the festival. Tickets £10 from the-plug.com.



Photo by Nathan Gibson

OPUS INDEPENDENTS PRESENTS

FESTIVAL OF DEBATE

MARCH & APRIL 2015

A SERIES OF PANEL DISCUSSIONS, DEBATES, Q&AS, ARTISTIC RESPONSES AND KEYNOTE SPEECHES IN SHEFFIELD, AIMING TO CREATE A MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE AROUND KEY SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES IN THE LEAD-UP TO THE GENERAL ELECTION ON 7TH MAY.

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Nereus, 2011

THE CHILDISH CITY

WHAT DOES YOUR CHILD DO?

.....

I'm walking home from work through Weston Park. Two toddlers are chasing the ducks. The parents are on high alert, sensing the dangers of the greeny-grey pond, and the adventure of going to the park quickly degenerates into a tense stand-off between adult and child. The ducks find this predictable and hilarious. They're also chuckling at the sign that says, "Ducks only in this area". "Idiot humans," is their obvious response.

I've been reading Mary Poppins - not the musical, but the mighty thick book by PL Travers - to my daughter, and I can tell you that it's really very good. In the story, newborn babies are fluent in a universal language they share with everything around them, except grown-up humans. As they grow, they lose this knowledge and become deaf to what animals, plants, rivers, weather, sun, moon and stars are saying to each other. Mary Poppins is still tuned into that original wavelength. Any parent who's guessed their infant is born with a fully-formed sense of what they want to tell you, but you just can't translate, will grasp

have been making this mistake for decades, and they like doing it to the outdoors as well. Don't get me wrong, a bit of urban design is good. My arrival at Sheffield railway station, dishevelled by work on a miserable, wet evening, has been transformed by the play of colour, light and water, and the rhythmic shuffle of pedestrians along a majestic arc. But what does your child do there? It stops and stares at its distorted reflection in the huge, dribbling mirror, puts its hands into the streams. "Come on now, don't get wet," you implore.

What if we offset these super-organised spaces with ones that we shaped ourselves, and allowed kids and nature to help? On side streets that are safe but just that bit too quiet, we could make room for temporary sculptures, drawings, worn-out musical instruments. We could set up mini-gardens in the grass verges. The ever-changing palette of things to look at and play with would make journeys through town much more interesting for children as well as grown-ups.

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"NATURE SMILES PATRONISINGLY AT US"

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the notion that the author is riffing on.

Watching a blackbird or a squirrel working to gather food and maintain their homes, it's obvious they must have sussed out a pretty efficient system a very long time ago. By comparison, the way we construct our cities and move around them is incredibly new, so it's no wonder we do it so inefficiently, hurling huge amounts of energy at every task, and some more at repairing what we did wrong. The latest plans and schemes of humans must look pretty naive to the other creatures around us. When we build a new building or landscape a garden, nature smiles patronisingly at us and then sets to work, inhabiting its nooks and crannies, trowelling on the pigeon shit and pushing dandelions between the cracks. It boils down to this: we fool ourselves that we're forging ahead at the peak of our powers to shape places, but actually we're only just beginning to learn.

You can see this in the way we mark out little stone boxes around street trees, employ hi-viz personnel to stop us playing in the water features in the Peace Gardens, and plaster every surface with safety disclaimers. It's not because people can't behave, but because we design the city through artists' impressions, emptied of any empathy for how we instinctively use things. Architects

Try, for example, turning off West Street at the tram stop and walking to the Showroom, past the Frog & Parrot, S1 Artspace, across the Moor, through the market and then down Matilda Street, before turning left towards the Rutland Arms at Persistence Works. How much more interesting could some crowd-sourced creativity make it? There would be obstacles of course. There's the tendency to see it as a source of the unkempt, the anti-social and the unsafe, but that's the kind of low-level risk aversion that has brought us sterile spaces watched by electronic eyes and governed by mistrust. The impermanence and informality would be part of the magic, and if we have to conquer a few grown-up fears, so be it.

If we can let ourselves imagine that the young children we drag around town in slings, backpacks, car seats and pushchairs understand things about the city that we don't, then we can start to listen to what they might tell us.

Andrew Wood

@andrewthewood



Hands, 2011

GEORGE MONBIOT

REWILDING THE WORLD

.....

George Monbiot is a writer, journalist, political activist and outspoken environmentalist with a weekly column in *The Guardian*. His most recent book, *Feral: Searching for Enchantment on the Frontiers of Rewilding*, is a call to restore and ‘rewild’ our damaged ecosystems, to stop containing and administrating nature, and a look towards a new, more positive form of environmentalism. We spoke ahead of his talk in Sheffield on 16 April as part of the Festival of Debate.

Are you looking forward to coming to Sheffield?

It’s always a great pleasure going to Sheffield. It’s my favourite English city. Partly because there’s so much happening there, and

people are so politically switched on, and partly because of the way the green space fingers right into the city. There are these really beautiful places you can go. You just step straight out of the urban area and into these really calm and lovely river valleys. I just think altogether it’s a very special place.

What will you be talking about?

I’ll be talking about rewilding. By then, with any luck, we should have launched our group, Rewilding Britain, so I’ll be able to give that a bit of a mention. Rewilding is about enhancing greatly the equality of our natural environment and the quality of our experiences in engaging with it. So while as environmentalists, we suggest to people that there’s all sorts of things we should no

longer do – we should fly much less often, we should consume less, we should live carefully and mindfully, with more consideration for other people and the rest of the world – at the same time we haven’t been offering much in return. What a positive environmentalism does is not to abandon all the calls for restraint, which obviously we must also have, but to say that that’s not all – there’s some really good stuff which we don’t have yet and we can have if we embrace this agenda, and to propose a vision of a better world, which has been quite badly lacking from a lot of environmental discussion so far.

We’ve got the Peak District on our doorstep here in Sheffield. What’s your vision for those spaces?

I see the Peak District as an ecological disaster zone. To me it looks like the aftermath of a nuclear winter. It is an extraordinary thing, when we consider that that was once all covered with rainforest, and has been reduced to what anyone in the tropics would immediately recognise as a highly degraded and depleted ecosystem, dominated by low scrub composed of just a few species.

We’ve got to look at ways of restoring our lost ecologies in places where it’s most appropriate, and those places are where agricultural production is lowest. What rewilding means to begin with is allowing the trees to come back and allowing self-willed ecosystems to develop. The land would do its own thing and we would see a fascinating, complex set of wild habitats developing. And then, what I would like to see is us reintroducing some of our missing species, and really bringing back as many as we

We’re seven years on from the financial crisis now and the vast majority of political discussion is still framed by austerity and fear of the deficit, as well.

You’re quite right. The antidote to it, I feel, should have been for Labour to come out and denounce austerity as a con, and demonstrate why it is a con. It’s very easy to do. There’ve been plenty of situations where Britain has had a far worse economic balance than we have today, and yet we were able to engage in radical public spending that transformed the nation in a positive fashion. There are plenty of financial instruments we could call on to make austerity redundant, even if we do accept the need to reduce the deficit so rapidly. For example, land value taxation or financial transactions tax. Why isn’t Labour putting these front and centre? Of course, when it comes to austerity and the deficit, the Conservatives are going to do it more effectively than Labour can, because that’s their whole shtick.

What are your thoughts on what local devolution should look like?

Both this government and the previous government have really been offering fake devolution. They’ve been talking a great talk about how power should be devolved to communities, but without actually devolving real power. What we need to see is almost starting at the other end. It’s not so much, ‘What can government hand down to local authorities?’ but to picture it as if you were starting from scratch. What could the local community – way below the level of the local authority – make use of?

I would start with the power of development. You take it out

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“JOURNALISM IS ALL ABOUT TRIVIAL IMMEDIACIES”

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can, ecologically and politically, to as many land areas in Britain as become available.

We’re set for quite an interesting General Election. What effect do you think the splintering of political parties will have?

We’re entering a period of political fragmentation, and I believe this is a good thing. We’ve been in a very long period now of political stagnation, where we’ve had a choice between three parties which are scarcely distinguished from each other on many critical issues, such as the nature of the economy, for example, such as foreign wars – just about all the things which are genuinely important. The more that falls apart, the greater the opportunities become for a more democratic and representative politics, and the rise not just of the Greens, but also of the SNP and Plaid Cymru – all led by women, all with a really fresh feel to them – is I think a wholly positive development.

The worry is that, like the Lib Dems at the last election, a lot of people feel really energised and excited by a smaller party, only to become completely disillusioned if things don’t change.

You’re quite right that a lot of people became extremely disillusioned by what the Lib Dems did, and I think a lot of people almost gave up on politics altogether as a result. It was astonishing, and a classic example of politic short termism. I think journalism is partly responsible for that. Journalism is all about trivial immediacies. Something which a politician said today acquires far greater importance than slow, long-running trends which aren’t necessarily newsworthy but determine the shape of our lives. Politicians fit themselves into that and forget about their long-term aims and principles.

of the hands of the developers and the volume house builders and the supermarkets and the planners, and you basically hand as much of it as you can to the local community, and say, ‘You design the new estates. You work out where the green spaces are going to be.’ This tends to produce far better developments than this helicopter model of the big volume house builders coming in and saying, ‘Right, you’re having this. Take it or leave it.’ Then you sort of build it up from there, to issues like the People’s Budgets, which they have in Porto Alegre [in Brazil], for example. If you follow that through, you’ll see that there’s a huge number of functions currently in the hands of the government which could be much better discharged by communities at one level and local authorities at another level.

Sam Walby

George Monbiot will speak at the SU Auditorium on 16 April as part of Festival of Debate. Tickets available at su.sheffield.ac.uk.

monbiot.com



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FOOD

BEST OF BRITISH

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Describing exactly what British cuisine is can be tricky, because we live in a culture that has been shaped by other culinary influences. Perhaps it's easier to identify what is seasonal, and in April this includes lamb, rocket, watercress, wild garlic, spring onions and venison.

We talked to chef Tom Lawson from Rafter's restaurant in Nether Green and Paul Widdowson from Abbeydale Road's Mr Pickles, purveyors of Yorkshire-sourced ingredients, to get their take on British seasonal eating.

What does British cuisine mean to you?

[Paul] I grew up hearing that British food was rubbish. I quickly discovered the vast array of delicious produce that makes this country one of the best places for food.

We seem to have been dealing with two extremes when it comes to food in Britain. We have the mass produced foods that somehow became mainstream (remember Findus Crispy Pancakes?), and then we have the fine dining restaurant quality that we see on programmes such as Masterchef. I'm delighted that there is a growing interest in provenance and it's fantastic working with people who produce great quality food.

[Tom] One of the core principles we run the menu on is seasonality. Some of the best produce in the world comes from Britain - forced Yorkshire rhubarb, fantastic strawberries, shellfish from Scotland. The list goes on and on.

It is so exciting that we have so much from this country that we can use seasonally as the year progresses, and of course we are currently in forced Yorkshire rhubarb season. It's only a short window, but the vibrant flavour and colour are great.

What excites you about the ingredients available in April?

[Paul] Asparagus is a given and the other ingredient that I look forward to is watercress. The British season runs from April until October and it's at its peppery best at the start and end of the season. A delicious steak with a watercress salad is one of my favourite things.

[Tom] The first of the English asparagus will be seen and we go foraging for wild garlic, a perfect match for

spring lamb.

Where do you source your produce from?

[Paul] At Mr Pickles, we get as much produce from Sheffield as we can and get all of our beef and lamb from Firs Farm on Ringinglow Road. Jim and Angela Battye are delighted that their meat is now being enjoyed by local people. We get a lot of vegetables from Sheffield Organic Growers and Full Circle Farm deliver the best salad bags.

[Tom] We have a clear vision of what we want to serve at Rafter's, which is quality. We use local suppliers and support local businesses, as well as importing directly from markets in Paris and Milan to enable us to have the best produce available.

Can you give some tips on how to get value for money when cooking with seasonal ingredients?

[Paul] Undoubtedly the supermarkets have changed our way of buying food, but to get value for money you should try and buy what you need, rather than what they package up for you. Check the price per kilogram on the packages against the price you would pay if you were to buy the same item loose.

We've also lost touch with the different cuts of meat available. We've had great success in selling the lesser known, tastier, cheaper cuts of beef in our first year, such as shin, feather blade, short rib and chuck. Knowing all these different cuts and how versatile they are can really expand your home cooking repertoire and save you money.

[Tom] Using the lesser known, cheaper cuts - ox cheek, for example - can give a massive yield for little money. They do require care and attention when cooking and take a long time to cook. My advice for the keen amateur cook is to invest in a slow cooker. They are great for those with a busy lifestyle as you can prepare everything the night before, put it on before you go to work and it's ready when you get in with no fuss.

Ros Arksey
@Nibbly_Pig



POTATO GNOCCHI WITH PISTACHIO

Recipe by Simon Ayres, Cross Scythes

Serves 2

-

175g passed baked potato
20g '00' pasta flour
1 egg yolk
20g chopped pistachio
1 bunch chopped chervil (French parsley)
Salt
Pepper

Mix the potato and egg, then slowly add flour and season well. Add the pistachio and herbs. Pipe the mixture into logs on parchment paper and cut into desired lengths, then set in the fridge to chill for an hour. Bring out and poach in boiling water for two and a half minutes, then plunge into ice water, drain and pat dry. Finish in a pan and fry in oil and butter until the edges are golden and crisp. Serve with your choice of garnish, such as mushrooms, beetroot, squash and parsley.

FRENCH YORKSHIRE DRESSING

Recipe by Mr Pickles

150ml Yorkshire rapeseed oil
50ml Ali & Me cider vinegar
1 level tsp mustard
1 level tsp salt
A few grinds black pepper
1 large garlic clove, peeled and mashed
1 sprig parsley
1 sprig watercress
1 spring onion

Either put all the ingredients into a blender and run at medium speed for about a minute, or mix the oil and vinegar in a bowl then add mustard, salt, pepper and garlic. Finely chop the watercress, parsley and spring onion and add to the mix. Whisk before serving. Adapted from Darina Allen's Ballymaloe French dressing.

The Wick at Both Ends

Est. 2010



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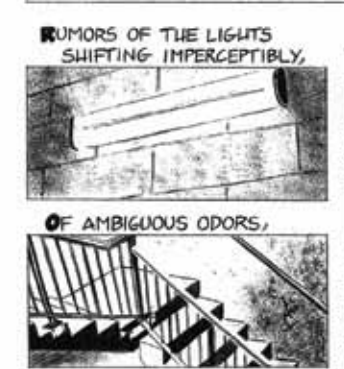
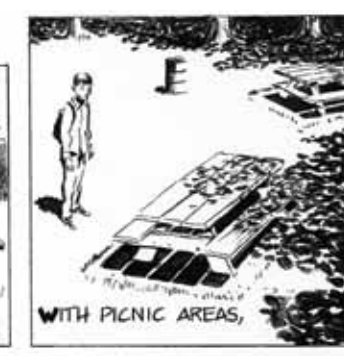
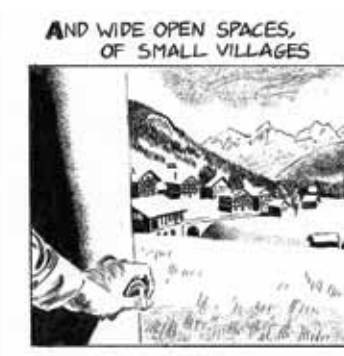
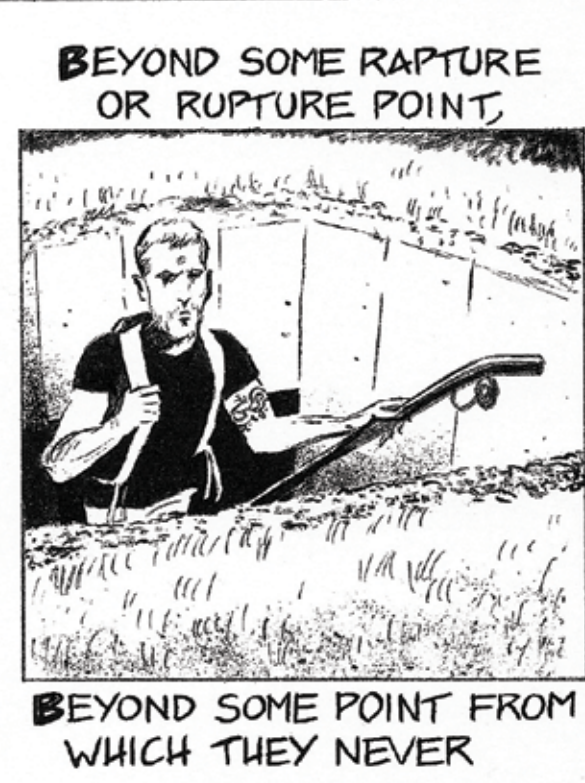
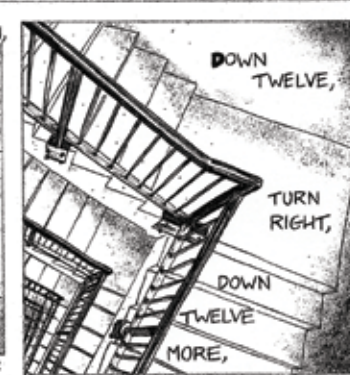
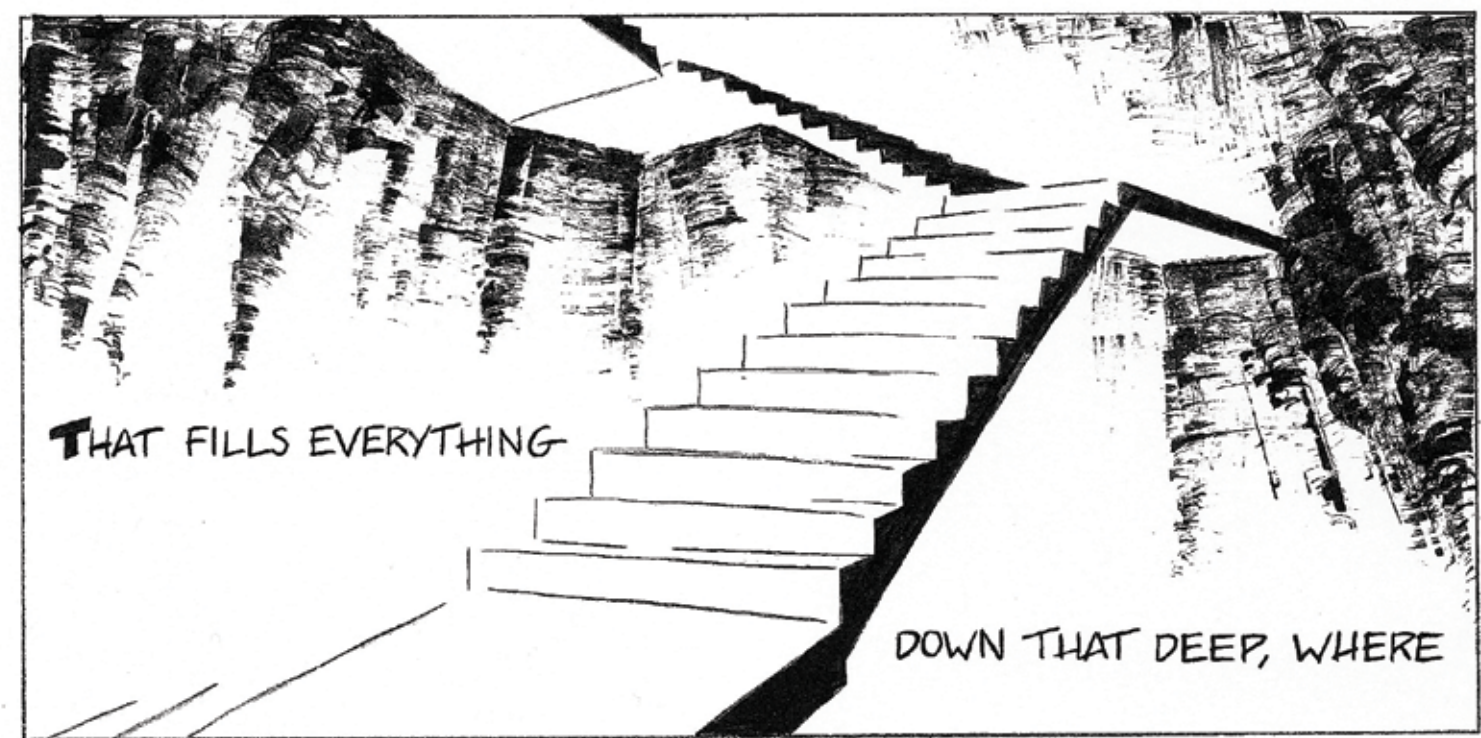
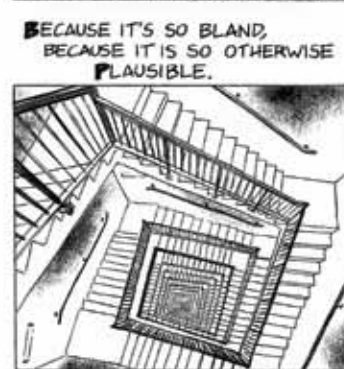


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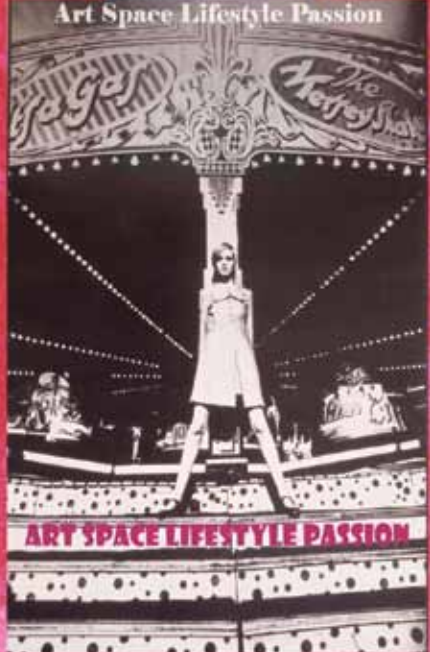
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COOL BEANS

GUIDE TO PASSING YOUR DRIVING TEST



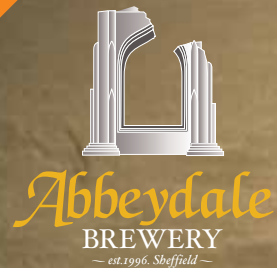
Much like taking your first steps as a child, getting your first job that pays half the minimum wage and attending your first swingers' party, passing your driving test is an exciting rite of passage in an otherwise fairly long and dull life. Failing it can be heartbreaking. I personally failed my driving test 36 times on the trot. I was about to give up altogether, but luckily on my 37th attempt my uncle was the test inspector. I had recently walked in on him snuggling with someone who definitely wasn't my aunt and, to cut a long story short, I've been happily roaming the roads ever since. Although now that I'm much older and wiser, I realise there are other ways apart from emotional blackmail to take home the much-coveted driving test certificate.

1. Taking your driving test can be really nerve-racking. A little Dutch courage before you partake is fully recommended. Don't be selfish now - be sure to share some with your driving instructor upon arrival.
2. Find out early on whether your driving instructor prefers the 'V sign', 'flipping the bird' or outright swearing at strangers who drive more than 3mph below the speed limit. You could bond over a shared interest.
3. An ever-so-slight rub on the knee can go a long way.
4. If you're not sure about a certain manoeuvre, a quick web search on your phone should sort you out. If your 3G isn't working, don't be afraid to make a quick phone call to a friend or relative. The same rule applies to sat navs. It's just common sense people.
5. In the event of taking your driving test in your own car, don't be afraid to accessorise your machine. We all know how great those eyelashes look on your front beams, but why stop there? Get a tasteful Mohawk strip going across the top

and a rubbery, flaccid penis dragging underneath. The more anthropomorphised your ride is, the more chance you have of passing.

6. Around 40% of driving tests result in failure, similar to the percentage of marriages that end in divorce. Your relationship with your instructor must be built on a solid bedrock of love, mutual understanding and rampant sexual ardour, or it is doomed from the get-go.
7. Sometimes nature calls, so hook your nether regions up to a pipe that flows around your body to a urine bag (or as it's more colloquially known, a piss packet). Your instructor will be none the wiser. However, try to avoid the use of an excretion bucket.
8. It's a well-known fact that the most successful driver of all time is a man called Jeremy Clarkson. Be sure to emulate this man's behaviour at all times whilst taking your test. If you forget what Clarkson stands for, just remember the 'isms': sexism, racism, classism, homophobia.
9. If you're under the belief that you're not going to pass due to lack of knowledge, lack of practice and general ineptitude, it might be an idea to send someone who looks a bit like you and can drive correctly. If in doubt, clothe your imitator in a big hat, shades and a woolly coat.
10. If you're nervous, just make sure you breathe. This will prevent you from dying. Everything else is up to you.
11. Finally, if at first you don't succeed, try again. And again. And again. And again. And again. And then one more time after that.

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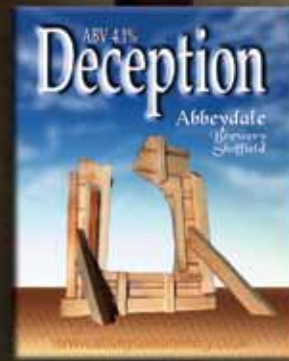
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Thursday 9th: Eurosession continental folk dancing and music. From 8:30pm.**Friday 10th:** Green City Blues. Learn to dance to swing and blues music from 8pm with social dancing session from 9. £5.**Saturday 11th:** The King Bee Rhythm & Blues Club £4.**Monday 13th:** The Toffee Vaudeville & Music Hall Club. £3, all profits go to the Weston Park
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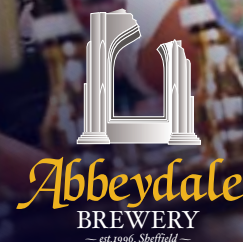
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ALISON LAMBERT

HUMAN PRESENCES

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It's always a pleasure to return to an artist we have featured in the past. In the case of London-based Alison Lambert, it was June 2011 (NT#39), perhaps my favourite ever issue of Now Then. For our seventh birthday magazine, we thought we'd invite Alison and her stunning charcoal drawings back onto these pages.

It's almost four years since we last featured your work in Now Then. What has happened in that time?

I suppose the main things are the sale of a drawing to the V&A collection, inclusion in their book, **The Art of Drawing: British Masters and Methods Since 1600**, and the sale of two monotype prints to the British Museum print collection. I also had prints selected for the 2014 International Print Biennale in Newcastle.

Which artists were the inspiration for the style you have developed?

Initially, 30 years ago when I first developed a style of my own, it was the artisans who made the ancient Greek and Roman

The head and face are the outward expression of the inner life. Through the drawings I try to tap something that's deeply subjective about the head (or 'person') that I'm describing. Hopefully, as far as expression and communication are concerned, people who look at the drawings will get the feeling that there is something there that's more than just the charcoal on paper or the description of a head or face. It's that human interaction that I'm interested in.

Your work is very physical. How do you think it translates to the screen?

The screen is only a depiction of the picture, like a photograph. It's completely different from the direct experience of the object. That's why students are encouraged to visit museums and galleries to directly experience the physicality of art works. In my case the direct experience of the broken and fragmented surface of the drawing is necessary. It's a metaphor for a kind of distancing and contemporary critique of traditional illusionistic portraiture. It's saying, 'This might look like a person, but it's actually a drawing'. In

.....

"MY STYLE HAS EVOLVED GRADUALLY OF ITS OWN VOLITION"

.....

sculpture we are all so familiar with. Around the same time I was influenced by some artists of the Romantic period - Delacroix, Velázquez, Géricault and Goya. Later, the paintings of Christopher Le Brun, De Chirico and Gérard Garouste. Since the early years, I haven't really been influenced by any artist. My style has evolved gradually of its own volition.

What themes and subjects are you exploring through your work?

My early work was inspired by Greek and Roman mythology and I suppose a feel for those mythic themes has always stayed with me, even though I'm not trying to illustrate old classical stories. I've also regularly used biblical and ancient Hebrew names, but names are usually selected after a drawing is finished. I think the names I choose just help to distance the work so it doesn't appear as if I'm portraying contemporary characters.

I've called my latest solo exhibition 'Human Presences' to indicate that I'm trying to express the 'inner world' of humans, whatever that inner world might be. It's something out of reach that psychologists, philosophers, theologians, novelists often try to tap into.

You seem to focus a great deal on the human head as a subject. Why?

fact it's both, but the visual illusion has to be broken by the surface. It's part of what might be described as 'critical modernism'.

For me the art work has to have a direct physicality, like a tree or a rock that shares the world with the viewer on a physical level.

What do you have planned for 2015? Do you have any exhibitions coming up?

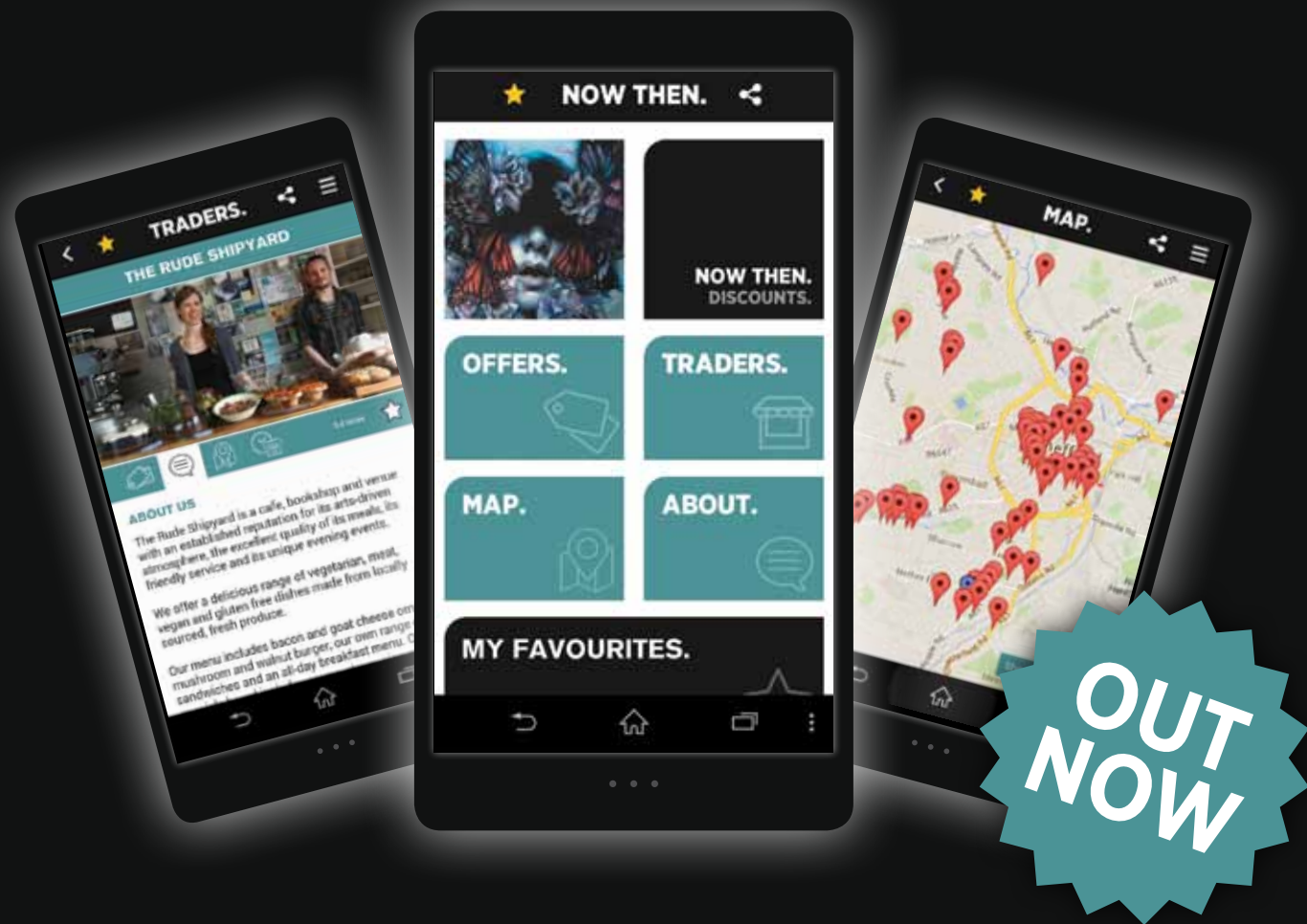
I've had a solo show at the Coningsby Gallery, London with Jill George Gallery and there will be a forthcoming solo exhibition in September at the Pasmore Gallery, Harrow School. I have print shows in London (April) and New York (November) with Pratt Contemporary Art. Harrow will be producing a substantial catalogue which I'm currently working on with the designers. Beyond November, I don't know where I'll be exhibiting but I'll be continuing working. I might even be doing some painting - traditional oil on canvas, of course.

Sam Walby

alisonlambert.com



Ursula, 2011



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Dante, 2014

SOUND

NOVELTY

.....

I've been saying for years that, so far as genuine novelty is concerned, music is all over bar the shouting. I've decided it's high time I stopped saying that.

My basic thesis was that, once synths and sampling migrated from specialist hardware onto relatively affordable general computing devices, the scope of sonic possibility had effectively been maximised. If you think of music and composition as a question of waveform creation - frequency and amplitude varying across time - then we've had the capability to do pretty much everything in that possibility space for decades. No sound, whether 'real' or 'artificial' - increasingly irrelevant distinctions in the hyper-real culture of late Late Capitalism - is beyond the reach of anyone with access to the same budget that they'd need to buy a cheap electric guitar and a little amplifier, at least in the privileged West. So it's postmodernity all the way down - collage, citation, pastiche, homage, remix, re-appropriation, rearrangement, recombination. New combinations and juxtapositions,

comparisons, to force things into pre-established generic pigeon-holes (or newly minted ones, if we're ambitious and vain, which we usually are). Unable to (re)create that which we are attempting to describe, we end up reiterating our own prejudices and preferences, fruitlessly forcing the new into whatever word cage we're capable of building. In our rush to place everything on a map of what we already know, we emphasise similarity rather than difference, the familiar over the novel.

This might not be a problem if it weren't for the Cambrian explosion of musical availability that the internet and other technologies have released. Back when the Beatles and the Stones ruled the roost, it was still theoretically possible for the average punter to hear the bulk of new releases, to surf precariously atop the wave of novelty. But certainly by the mid 90s it had become a significant challenge to keep on top of even a single sub-genre - the DJ's curse, we called it.

And now, all bets are off. Thousands of new releases every

“THERE'S STILL LIGHT YEARS OF POSSIBILITY YET TO BE EXPLORED”

perhaps, but nothing truly new.

But as a friend patiently pointed out to me over Boxing Day whisky sours, I'd mistaken the totality of capability for the totality of achievement, the possible for the realised. There's still light years of possibility yet to be explored, vast volumes of novelty yet to be mined. A few evenings of listening to 6 Music or trawling through Bandcamp and Soundcloud should've told me that.

I suspect the institution of music reviewing (and my involvement with such) is at least in part to blame for my misconception. As the oft-misattributed saying goes, talking - and hence writing - about music is like dancing about architecture. The whole magic of music lies in its ability to transcend the powerful yet limited ability of mere words to communicate ideas and emotions. While I never plan to stop trying to do so, there is a very real sense in which attempting to describe music using words is to try trapping air in a cage. One might successfully delimit some familiar shape or volume, but the music floats free despite our best efforts, leaving only the cage.

Perhaps this - combined with the limits of screen or page real-estate, of word counts and editorial policy and advertiser leverage - explains the time-worn urge of the music hack to make easy

month, with no central clearing house, no authoritative papers or magazines - just hundreds of curators assembling their own personal canons for private or public appreciation. We're all faced with John Peel's problem - which would be a fine problem to have, to be honest, were one lucky enough to be paid a living wage to deal with it. What hope do we mere consumers have?

I realise now that I'd fallen into the habit of believing that the new music I heard (or even simply heard of) was all there was - reiterations of what I already knew and understood, copies or combinations of things I had names for. I realise now I was wrong. What was lacking wasn't novelty in music, but my own efforts to seek it out, not to mention my willingness to listen to things on their own merits, to give novelty a fair hearing, to leave the cage door open so that something new might wander in.

I don't have John Peel's job (more's the pity), but perhaps I can try harder to have his openness. The cages I built only ever trapped myself.

Paul Graham Raven

LIVE

.....

COMPUTER CLUB ALGORAVE

20 MARCH
ACCESS SPACE

What the heck is algorave, I hear you ask? It's a portmanteau: the melding of algorithm and rave, used to describe music partly or fully generated by lines of computer code. That's a somewhat academic distinction, given that the majority of electronic music is created using computers and specialised electronic hardware, so it might help to think about the difference between a musician selecting the notes, tones and patterns to be used in a piece, and a musician writing lines of programming code which make those selections on their behalf, with some degree of randomness thrown in along the way.

This session at Computer Club is not the first such event I've been to, but it's by far the most musical. Algorave started as a branch of the digital arts, a thing more of galleries than of club nights, and it sometimes prizes the novelty of its aesthetic over its musicality - which is to say that it can be pretty undance-able and sometimes all but unlistenable. But tonight's performances are more dance-oriented, sandwiched between DJ sets combining classic and contemporary techno sounds, and the tiny Access Space maker lab is packed with nodding heads and tapping toes.

There's a sense in which this feels like a natural evolution of the 'trainspotter' culture of 90s techno, where the appreciation became more about method and hardware than about groove and melody. The wall behind the performers displays their laptop screens, where program variables and what look like exploded mathematical equations are spliced in real time. Has electronica finally found its equivalent to the performative technicality of prog rock, a heroism not of Fender, Marshall and fretboards, but of Apple, Ableton and computer keyboards? What does it matter - there are beats and bass, and your feet won't care how they're made.

Paul Graham Raven

SAN SODA

13 MARCH
THEATRE DELI

It would be an understatement to describe the booking of San Soda by Sheffield promotion collaboration Nice Like Rice and Lunar as a hefty one. The Belgian DJ-cum-Berlin producer regularly finds himself behind the decks at the German capital's world renowned Panorama Bar and only recently returned to Europe following a stint in south-east Asia that included sets in Bali, Beijing and Hanoi.

On Friday 13 March, the co-founder of We Play House Records haunted the decks at a lesser known Sheffield dancehall - the old vacated Woolworths on The Moor.

Blasting through a mammoth, four-hour set playing mostly vinyl, the DJ drew upon a lifetime's worth of record collecting and a variety of subgenres, from garage house to straight-up disco and funk, often mixed above a bed of afro drum loops. San Soda duly delivered a set to galvanise the crowd on the packed makeshift dance floor, most of whom remained for the duration.

But for all the talent on show during the main event, it's possibly those who organised the night who are deserving of the most recognition. Some of the old shop remnants remained in evidence, from floor tiles to cash register, but that didn't stop the venue being dressed like a deranged urban garden parlour that could only be accessed via a dark corridor of Sheffield-inspired art and heart-shaking bass.

The only faults lay in the lack of rave lighting and the presence of a dismembered mannequin, which embedded an unsavoury image in the minds of some of the more tripped-out party goers. Any negatives were inevitably offset by the nostalgia of pic 'n' mix sweets and the varied barrage of high-brow dance numbers.

Will Hitchmough

SIVU

12 MARCH
BUNGALOWS & BEARS

Sivu is the nom de plume of singer songwriter James Page, Sivu being the Finnish translation of his surname. He released his debut album, **Something On High**, late last year and has received acclaim from various radio stations and broadsheets.

Dan Whitehouse has the perennial support slot troubadour problem - facing a crowd who are busy chattering at the bar, armed only with an acoustic guitar, but he performs his folk-influenced songs with a confidence and maturity. There is a mix of material from his **Stories For You** album along with unreleased works-in-progress. Penultimate song 'Win Again' is the highlight, a new song which showcases his lyrical dexterity.

Tonight, Sivu is joined by Lucy Parnell on keyboards, guitar and effects, while he plays spare, haunting guitar. But it's his dreamy, falsetto voice which really adds lustre to this set. The first two songs, 'Sleep' and 'Communicate', follow a similar low-key gossamer path - lightly strummed guitar, a sympathetic keyboard phrase and vulnerable, shimmering vocals.

'Feel Something' and 'Bodies' are higher tempo with rhythm tracks energising the sound, giving the necessary pulse and momentum. The overall sound is still full of grace and emotion, but is denser and has a definite backbone. The closer is 'Better Man Than Me', his debut single, which has garnered much interest via an innovative video shot inside an MRI scanner.

Shorn of the visual trickery, the song stands up well, with Page's soaring, impassioned vocal melding with a simple piano motif.

Page labels his music as alternative pop, but at its core are simple quasi-folk songs which are given a modern twist with a tasteful, slightly off-kilter sheen. He aspires to the timeless melodies of Frank Sinatra and, though he is somewhat adrift of that, he certainly has an ear for a delicate and sensitive tune.

Pete Martin

LISTINGS

HOSTED BY
ALEX HEF-TEE

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Do not be fooled! Hopefully you were four steps ahead this 1 April and quadruple bluffed yourself that everything was in Opposite Land until you untangled like a satisfying knot at around 1pm. Apparently it's bad luck to fool anyone after noon. It's definitely after noon now, unless you're that guy who goes to Golden Harvest on the first of every month, has a macaroon, and carefully reads Now Then from cover-to-cover before sneezing on the reviews. In which case, congratulations! You win this month's competition and free entry to all these events.

K.O.G AND THE ZONGO BRIGADE

2 April | Harley | £4/5

Sheffield's much-loved afrobeat collective return home for the penultimate gig of their debut tour after exciting airtime on 6 Music and an entry on Glastonbury's Emerging Talent shortlist. Support from Smiling Ivy, Bongo Tribes, Zeeni, Lodger and King David.

FROGBELLY AND SYMPHONY

11 April | Plug | £7/£8

International quirky folk-prog outcasts who toe the musical line. An intriguing Brooklyn/Sheffield collective of wistful troubadours materialise at Plug for a special show.

THE MOUSE OUTFIT W/ DR SYNTAX AND SPARKZ

17 April | Queen's Social Club | £10/12/15

The extremely popular Manchester massive return to Sheffield with their nine-piece live band playing horn-driven funky hip-hop fronted by Dr Syntax and Sparkz. Touring their new album, **Step Steadier**, expect Queen's to be freshened up by a sparkly, high-energy show.

FLOATING POINTS

18 April | Hope Works | £16/20

Floating Points has been fashioning funky cuts and entrancing house since 2009 and is revered by producers and DJs alike. His vinyl-only sets are bloomin' brill. Support from Anthony Naples.

STANTON WARRIORS

18 April | The Night Kitchen | £12/14

The only galactic superstars from Brizzle named after manhole covers, Stanton Warriors touch down in the intimate surroundings of The Night Kitchen for a smash-out set keeping everyone happy, like spinning plates, touching all bases.

QUADRUPÈDE

27 April | Audacious Art Experiment | £5 donation

French weirdos Quadrupède make excellent use of all four legs with frenzied drumming and enough loop pedals to circumnavigate the globe twice. Music to stampede to. Support from Bearfoot Beware.

Find more listings online at nowthenmagazine.com.



COURTNEY BARNETT

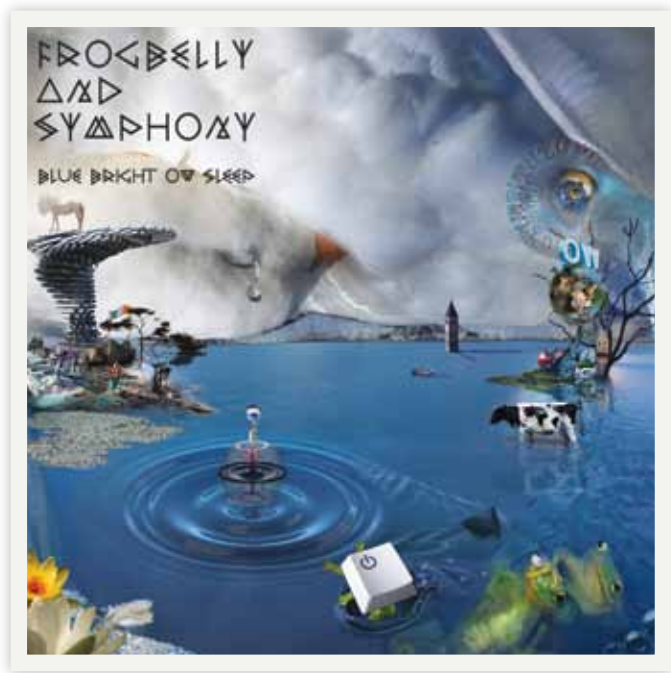
**SOMETIMES I SIT AND THINK,
AND SOMETIMES I JUST SIT**
Mom + Pop

Whilst some of Australia's musical output is soaked in a sun-drenched psych or dreamy pop, easily the most exciting and interesting artist to emerge from Down Under recently is Courtney Barnett. The Melbourne native has been making music for the best part of a decade now, but it wasn't until the release of **The Double EP: A Sea of Split Peas** in 2013 that she announced herself to the world. A quick scan of music sites will attest to the fact that Courtney is one of the most talked about and admired musicians right now. The release of her debut album is likely to see her catapulted to a new level.

Sometimes I Sit and Think, and Sometimes I Just Sit is as impressive as it is unassuming. In many ways it's a glimpse into the inner working of the Australian singer's mind. Musically, it's an album which encompasses a myriad of influences. It feels loosely shambolic whilst effortlessly proficient, providing a fresh and hazy backdrop for her languid drawl. What elevates Courtney Barnett above her peers is clever lyricism. In a world where lyric writing is becoming an increasingly endangered art, she's one of the few musicians with the magical ability to connect. Whilst her everyday musings strike a chord on an obvious level, on 'Depreston' she effortlessly wanders into the profound.

It's an album which rewards dedication. Lead single 'Pedestrian At Best' immediately jumps out at you, but if you invest some time you'll find new and startling small revelations on each track. The album feels marvellously ragged and light whilst being underpinned by a rare and beautiful depth.

Rob Aldam



FROGBELLY AND SYMPHONY

BLUE BRIGHT OW SLEEP
Labelship

What I love about Frogbelly and Symphony is the unimaginable fusion of genres and instruments – so delightfully smooth, you wonder why you questioned combining them. This is a band that combines catchy pop songs with incredible musicianship, throwing in a twist of angst, poetry and politics. With roots stemming not only from Sheffield but all over Europe and the States, their influences span as far as the eye can see and as far back as the mind can remember, emphasised by the words of singer and composer Tom Hanley: "Nowadays we're blessed with the possibility to take the inspirational tint from centuries of musical and lyrical repertoires."

Blue Bright Ow Sleep is the band's first full-length album and brings together an incredible mix of talent. Track by track, they bring fresh surprises, no song echoing another. Opener 'Mindbender' begins with soft dreamy vocals, gradually building up before an incredible punk riff and spoken vocal interjection, and finally a beautiful string melody and climax where all three aspects melt together. It sounds out-there, but it's absolutely seamless. 'Ride Off into the Sunset and Disappear' is full of drama.

'Before I Die' has an essence of Lou Reed, while 'Shingle' is more of a typical Irish folk song. The penultimate track, 'Organism', is inspired by a couple of near-death experiences of the band members themselves, giving more depth to an already moving and powerful ballad. As classically trained musicians, Frogbelly have so much to offer – the beautiful string sections peppered over the album are no exception. Returning to Sheffield on 11 April to play at Plug, I urge you to get your tickets and see what all the fuss is about.

Tasha Franek



NAI HARVEST

HAIRBALL
Topshelf Records

The vague path from punk to catchy indie rock via shoegaze and/or post-rock is so well-travelled that it's never really a cause for surprise anymore. Much-loved 90s emo band Jawbreaker famously angered virtually their entire scene with their new sound on **Dear You**, but today such defections are no longer controversial.

A recent example is local duo Nai Harvest, who made their name with that fun, messy, twiddly thing that was more than a little reminiscent of Cap'n Jazz. But on last year's **Hold Open My Head** EP they traded that for a more measured, clean indie rock sound. It felt a bit thin on ideas at times, but the songs were decent enough to hope they'd come good on this sophomore full-length, **Hairball**.

Despite ambitious comparisons to Cloud Nothings, Ty Segall, Pavement and Ride in the promo material, what we get here is the kind of summery garage-pop which has been abundant in recent years. Hairball never really sticks its head much above the crowd and struggles to distinguish itself.

It isn't without its good points. 'Buttercups' in particular packs a real punch and a triumphant melody, but it is a song already released elsewhere more than six months ago and now on a second lease of life. You really miss it once it's followed by low point 'Ocean of Madness' though, a cringe-inducer that sounds ominously like an Oasis b-side and has the lyrical insight to match ("Don't wanna drown in an ocean of madness / I wanna swim in an ocean of you"). But most of the songs on Hairball are neither good nor terrible. They're middle-of-the-road, fairly inoffensive, likely more than anything to drift in one ear and out the other without registering much of anything in between.

Thomas Sprackland



SQUAREPUSHER

DAMOGEN FURIES
Warp

Damogen Furies is Squarepusher's 14th studio album. When his first release, **Stereotype** EP, went on sale, Bill Clinton was in the White House and 'Parklife' was in the charts. Since then, Tom Jenkinson has become something of a musical convention. Known for his virtuosity on the electric bass, his highly technical production approach and his epic chopped up breaks, I was keen to delve in on a misty Sunday morning, hoping to be revitalised with some coffee and IDM. I was not disappointed.

Fans of Squarepusher will already have heard 'Rayc Fire 2' on Warp Records' website and will know that in terms of style this is exactly what we might have expected all along. The record is frantic, funky and intense. Squarepusher has a sensibility for the catchy melody beneath most his work over the years and this album is no different. 'Stor Eiglass', the record's opener, might be on the brink of a power ballad in terms of harmony, but beneath it sits twisted, sliced and diced breakbeats. A lot of the record is highly melodic. The listener is seldom spared from intricate, ravey polyphonic synths driving the music forward. There is a strong sense of progression too. By the time we arrive at 'Exjag Nives', the harmony is much less conventional and the jungle cuts are more manic and adventurous.

On top of the excellent jazzy work, the production value is immense and typically precise. The drums are powerful and the balance of all the elements in the mix is exquisite. If you are already a fan of Squarepusher, this record will fit nicely into your collection. If you are unaware of this electronic institution, you could find worse musicians to become familiar with.

Fred Oxby



AKALA

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

.....

O riginating from the grime scene, Akala has gone on to produce several albums, a graphic novel and the Hip Hop Shakespeare Company, an initiative that offers young people a new view of the arts.

Always one to tackle a question head on, Akala took time out to discuss his new album, grime's resurgence and politics in hip hop.

Your new album, Knowledge Is Power II, drops on 30 March. What can we expect from that?

You can expect an evolution of my previous albums. It's kind of the most hip hop and grime inspired work I've done in

a while. It's still 90% hip hop, but it's very boom bap, very hard sounding, very forthright in its opinions. It's just a collection of original songs that I think are a testament to how I've felt this last year. There's a development in style, but also a return to my older stuff. It's more aggressive, both sonically and lyrically, than, say, **Thieves Banquet**, which was a bit more thoughtful and reflective.

Hip hop in the UK seems to be particularly strong at the moment, with artists like Trellion and Sniff here in Sheffield and groups like Sub Luna City down south. Who's exciting you in music at the moment?

Yeah, I completely agree. I was really excited by Big

Narstie's Fire In The Booth [on BBC Radio 1Xtra]. I'm excited by the new Kano track, and what Lady Leshurr is doing. I think there's a lot of strong UK hip hop out right now. I feel like there's a resurgence coming about.

Speaking of resurgences, what do you think about this grime 'comeback' that's currently ongoing?

Yeah, that's very strong at the moment. Obviously, that big [Red Bull Culture] clash that was caught last year with Boy Better Know and Rebel Sound and all those guys helped take grime to a new place.

Some have said it feels like the first time brands and mainstream media are embracing the culture. Do you think they've realised it sells or is that just cynicism?

I don't know. I think the mainstream media is the mainstream media. It's gonna do what it's gonna do. It's going to write about what it thinks is hot this week then drop it the next. I don't think we can really be too concerned with what the media does. At least I'm not too concerned. All we have to be concerned with is building a strong, unbreakable, credible scene like there is in other parts of the world. If we look to France, Brazil, the US, obviously there's a strong scene, and in the UK we've never really built that with hip hop. Rock bands have it, punk bands have it. There's independent scenes of music outside of the mainstream that exist by themselves. Jungle had it, garage had it. Hip hop and grime have never managed to. We've got a scene, but we've not got an industry in the same way all those I just mentioned have had.

“HIP HOP WAS PRODUCED BY A PARTICULAR SOCIAL ANTAGONISM”

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Why do you think that is?

Lots of reasons: lack of infrastructure, lack of business understanding, lack of A&R support. The fact that our music is both class-based and racialised makes it a much more difficult challenge for the mainstream media, because all of their prejudices are put on the artists they are trying to sign at the cost of the original sound and original appearance of the artist. All of those challenges are faced by the music. We've never had - in the way that America had - a Nas or a Public Enemy, a Wu Tang. A multi-million selling success story. We've never had that degree of credibility in my eyes, because they've never been put on that platform. So it means we're still a little bit behind in terms of the credibility of our industry.

Grime faces the challenges that any black-orientated music faces in this country. Any industry led in the majority by young black men in our racialised society is problematic. You had that in hip hop within the States, where it was monetised in a way that UK hip hop has never been. Here we've had a challenge. This country really doesn't want things that Big Narstie has to say to be put on a national platform. It's not just because of the colour of their skin, but because of what they're saying. It's how what they say affects people. We're a free society to a point, but the history of our society affects everything. It affects the music industry just like it does the entertainment industry. The decisions that record labels and radio stations at the height of power make are not made by people like me and you. They aren't regular, everyday people. They're made by people, generally, who come from much more privileged backgrounds,

whose parents own this or their business does that. There's a high level of nepotism at the highest level of government and industry. That's just the way it is and it's always been like that.

It has been reported recently that organisations in London receive, on average, £45 more in Arts Council funding than those outside the capital, a balance in London's favour of 5.4:1. Do you think the North-South divide is still affecting the arts?

I think it's still an issue within everything. It's a historic issue. There's a tendency to compartmentalise things and say it's limited to the arts. No, it affects everything: industry, healthcare. In every way the north of England has been historically more deprived than the south of England.

Is devolution the answer, or is this just people hoping for a quick fix?

I'm not sure. I don't have the answer. I think obviously more people-led power, anything that moves us towards a more democratic society - I mean the genuine word, not parliamentary democracy - any way you can more fairly share the resources of the country, is a step forward.

We're at a really important time politically and socially. Do you think more music should reflect this?

I think it is what it is. I choose to make music about political issues. That's my personal choice. I can't really say what anyone else's is.

I saw Billy Bragg a couple of years back and he said that the future of left-wing politics in music may lie in hip hop.

.....

What do you think to that?

I'm not surprised. I toured with Billy and Kate Tempest a couple of years back and he's right. Hip hop was produced by a particular social antagonism and mainstream hip hop has kind of betrayed its roots. It's become about selling people Bentleys and Rolls Royce and flashy cars. There is a section who still believe hip hop is a valid place to air out those grievances, but not everybody will agree with me.

The end of last year saw you release the graphic novel, Ruins of Empire. Have you got anything else in the pipeline for 2015, aside from music?

I'm hoping to do some live incarnations of the Ruins of Empire. We'll see. That might be 2016. I'm working on that at the moment, doing research and development as we speak. I'm trying to speak to all the composers and artists to try and figure out how we would do that live.

George Springthorpe

Akala plays Plug on 30 April at the closing party of the Festival of Debate. Tickets available at the-plug.com.

akalamusic.com

HEADSUP

SHEFFIELD FOOD COLLECTIVE

.....

It's organisations like Sheffield Food Collective that really give you a sense of pride in our city's community spirit. Set up by a couple of very humble and thoughtful individuals, the collective has grown extensively since February 2014 when it all began, building connections throughout the city and beyond. They work hard, not only with fundraising, but working practically with food banks across Sheffield, giving help to those who need it. We caught up with Laura Acaster, one of the founders.

First off, tell us a little bit about the collective. What sort of events do you put on?

We're a group of people that live in Sheffield that saw how the cuts were affecting people and how poverty was getting worse here. It upset us and we were shocked by it and we wanted to see what we could do to help, so we hooked up with some people that run different food organisations and food banks and told them about our ideas.

A lot of last year was putting on a lot of music events. People volunteered to help us out and run things for us. We tried some other events, like yoga, but realised that our music events were pretty successful. We have people that get in touch with us and ask to help us now. I guess that's the kind of ethos of a collective - we just keep branching out and more and more people want to chip in.

Do you think poverty is more of an issue in Sheffield than people realise?

There's a big split in Sheffield. There are three wards that are poorer than Tower Hamlets according to national statistics, then you've got the Hallam ward and that's the richest outside of London. There is this big split inside the city which is so uneven, but there is this big community spirit here - so many people that show a lot of interest in helping other people out.

Are there more organisations like your own that the people of Sheffield should be supporting?

Yeah, there are all sorts of different food organisations, like Timebuilders, Abundance, Food Cycle and Sheffield on a Plate. They're all really good organisations that we're in correspondence with a lot. They work in different communities as well.

Is there more that the government and local councils could be doing?

Well, we're essentially fulfilling a social need that should be fulfilled by the Council and the government. It's the welfare state. Since the reforms that the coalition government have brought in, things have got so much worse for people, and that's why people have turned to food banks.

How do you feel about the upcoming election?

There are three main parties and there isn't much difference between them, as they all occupy very similar views. For people who really care about the welfare state, it feels like there isn't much choice at all. I feel partially excited to maybe see a different front to the government, but I don't foresee it being the change that we really need.

What events have you got coming up?

First and foremost, our Diane Cluck gig on the 2 May. She is an amazing Virginia-based singer. She was in the anti-folk movement in New York and she's got such a beautiful voice and such interesting new-folk songs. We've put on shows for her before and she asked to come back and do a show for us. That's going to be at Upper Chapel on Norfolk Street, the beautiful church opposite the Brown Bear. You can get tickets from Party for the People online for £8 or £10 on the door.

We're working with food banks and are currently looking to work on a cuisine club and do the first one up at Parson Cross food bank. That will be an interesting, exciting way for people to learn different cuisines from across the globe. We'd be interested in hearing from chefs or anybody who is interested in food and fancies teaching a handful of people at different food banks. We also started Folk and Feast at the end of last year and we run those regularly now. It's great to keep people coming along to those. You can find out more about all of our projects on our Facebook page or by joining our mailing list.

Tasha Franek



facebook.com/sheffieldfoodcollective

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FILMREEL

GOODBYE TO LANGUAGE

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Let me take you back in time. I was going up those creaky spiralling stairs to meet who I believed to be a future collaborator in my filmmaking practice. As she stood outside her office, well aware of my admiration for the building we were in, she said, with a smile, “Architettura fascista.” Despite developing a number of film projects together in subsequent months, this was as far as we would ever get to connect.

The time we would spend together in person was dominated by her anxiety that woodworm was consuming that inherited workspace and by anecdotes about the various renowned filmmakers she’d worked with, not least of all a certain Jean-Luc Godard. To the vinyl crackle of the original soundtrack of the film they did together, she would describe the arrogant Godard justifying every odd bit of direction with scenes from classic films.

“Why is it important for my character to cross this room barefoot?” she would challenge him.

“Because of Ava Gardner in **The Barefoot Contessa**,” he would reply.

The paradox is that my creative interactions with this unnamed lady were always thwarted by her own need to constantly keep referencing other established work. This desperate ‘judging by comparison’ undermined the development of project after project and ultimately placed her in the same category as Godard - someone trapped somewhere between the conceptual and the theoretical, with the difference that the Nouvelle Vague filmmaker in question has a body of work behind him that is intrinsically connected with the development of cinema itself.

Let me take you back in time again. Now the year is of definite relevance, but I wasn’t around this time. In the context of a symposium in June 1979, Jean-Luc Godard illuminated film students with the following words: “Films, in my opinion, are hardly seen anymore, since for me ‘seeing’ means the possibility of comparing; but comparing two things, not comparing an image and the memory that one has of it. Compare two images, and at the moment one sees them, trace certain relationships.”

This statement was meant to address the potential of the then-emerging video technology, but it’s crucial in understanding the filmmaker’s posture in the decades that followed. If his earlier work displayed a vibrant curiosity about the medium, in the last 30 years Godard’s ways of ‘thinking cinema’ veered too much towards the didactic.

Encouraging as its title may be, in the over-verbal context of French cinema, his latest feature-length film, **Goodbye to Language 3D**, is the definite offspring of his exhaustingly ency-

clopaedic **Histoire(s) du Cinéma**, made between 1985 and 1998. If the latter claims for itself the ambition of painting a portrait of the 20th century through a collage of various cinematic works, the former applies the formula (and partially adapts the form) to a more contained personal drama. But it fails disastrously on many levels.

I’ve made my feelings towards 3D public in a previous Filmreel article (‘Tactile Thoughts’, NT#81), but in regards to its specific use in this film, I can only characterise it as a filmmaker’s desperation to remain current.

Goodbye to Language is a brochure no one asked for, when it could’ve been so much more. Despite never being a Godard fan, I went into it with an open mind. The premise was promising and could’ve made for a good film - the disintegration of a relationship between a married woman and a single man seen twice and played by four different actors, with a dog straying between city and nature along the way.

But it’s always the approach, more than the story, that ultimately defines authenticity and success. Godard may feel above it all - by adding a tone of importance to the endless voice-over statements, literary references and contrived dialogue - but his film is not exempt from this.

In visual terms, it often displays the very precise aesthetics you’d expect from someone of Godard’s calibre, but these become fleeting moments amidst horribly dated imagery and over-saturated colours. Contributing to this jarring unevenness is the use of sound, with its abrupt cuts and crude (lack of) treatment.

Actors describe the director’s precision in certain scenes, in which their action had to match that of the classic film being played back in the background. Perhaps this is what Godard meant by “comparing two things, not comparing an image and the memory that one has of it”, but in doing so, he’s exposing himself as two things - an eternal film student who thinks of himself as a master and, consequently, someone who relies on the pre-established to impose knowledge on others.

To put it plainly, Godard talks ‘at’ the viewer, not ‘to’ the viewer.

I fundamentally disagree with his 1979 statement and even more so with his new film, because both fail to acknowledge cinema’s inherent capacity to reach deep inside us in a dialogue of suggestion and memory.

João Paulo Simões



Goodbye to Language (2014)

FILM LISTINGS

HOSTED BY SAMANTHA HOLLAND

While We’re Young

NOAH BOAUMBACH, USA, 2014

MON 13 & THURS 16 APRIL | 11AM | SHOWROOM

Drawing on Ibsen’s **The Master Builder**, and starring Ben Stiller and Naomi Watts, this comedy revolves around two couples in New York City, one in their 40s the other in their 20s. Critics suggest the film manages to combine a solid dose of humour with genuine insight about the complexities of ageing. showroomworkstation.org.uk

Whiplash

DAMIEN CHAZELLE, USA, 2014

SAT 18 APRIL | 3:30 & 7:30PM | FILM UNIT

A film about passion, obsession, and being pushed to the brink of ability and sanity, this film looks at the life of a student working to become the best drummer there is, under the terrifying tutelage of Terence Fletcher. Attend and see what’s making the critics rave. facebook.com/flimunit

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facebook.com/filmsatnumber9

Inherent Vice

PAUL THOMAS ANDERSON, USA, 2014

SUN 26 APRIL | 3:30 & 7:30PM | FILM UNIT

An adaptation of Thomas Pynchon’s novel, this film revels in the less groovy sides of the 60s, and apparently frustrated audiences who demand coherence from a narrative film. But who needs the plot to make sense when psychedelic noir is on the cards? facebook.com/flimunit

FAVOURITES

OUR PICK OF INDEPENDENT SHEFFIELD

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LEADMILL

LEADMILL.CO.UK

This year Sheffield celebrates one of its defining institutions entering middle age. But far from suffering a mid-life crisis, The Leadmill has found itself reinvigorated, providing us with a broad range of gigs, screenings and nights out. On its 35th birthday year, it seems like a good time to celebrate the Leadmill's undeniable contribution to Sheffield's nightlife and music scene.

This anniversary also sees the venue affirm its reputation for bringing great names to Sheffield. Having already had The Horrors, Royal Blood and Echo & The Bunnymen play within the last six months, coming up soon are Johnny Marr, Wolf Alice and Public Service Broadcasting. Furthermore, May will see an influx of grime and hip hop artists helping the venue celebrate its birthday month, with everyone from JME to Toddla T and even the legendary Grandmaster Flash getting involved.

After sell-out screenings over Christmas, the popular Leadmill Cinematic will kick off again this summer with an intimate screening of Jurassic Park in June. If that seems too far away, comic talents like Sean Walsh (23 April) and Mark Watson (20 May) will soon make appearances, and the regular Leadmill Comedy Club will continue on the first Wednesday of each month.

The venue's four weekly club nights are also an eclectic and accessible part of the city's night life. With anthems guaranteed every night, they also mix it up with house, hip hop and Motown all staking their claim over various rooms.

Here's to 35 more years.



7 YEARS OF NOW THEN

NOWTHENMAGAZINE.COM

Over the last month or so, the fact that it's our 85th edition this April, marking seven years of the magazine, has cropped up a fair few times. We all tend to look down and smile, find ourselves staring in silence at each other. It feels like such a huge length of time to have committed and yet it also feels like it's absolutely flown by - the nature of a month in, month out project perhaps. This month we've been somewhat preoccupied with the Festival of Debate, so we'll be celebrating in our usual modest fashion in May with a brand new Now Then beer from long-time supporter, Abbeydale Brewery, available as always for a month in Sheffield's ale houses.

Now Then is first and foremost a labour of love and conscience, supporting independent music, art, thought and trade in Sheffield. Providing a place for multiple voices in high-quality print has always our aim. We like to think we're doing that, though we are always eager for feedback from readers about how we can improve or increase our impact on the city.

Putting a monthly free magazine together is a lot of work - a lot of work which would not be even remotely possible without the efforts of a large group of people. Sincere thanks to anyone and everyone who has been involved, volunteered their time or gone that extra mile for us over the years. Now Then would not be here without you.

CUBANA

CUBANATAPASBAR.CO.UK

Cubana is a real Sheffield success. After serving up the city's definitive tapas and live salsa experience for well over a decade at Trippet Lane, the Latin American bar and restaurant is trading up for bigger things. With a prime new Leopold Square location, and Big Swing nights moving there this month, Cubana will host the country's best swing musicians every single Wednesday.

The New Vintage Band on 15 April promise a cool night of swinging hits from across the decades. Plus with free entry, weekly classes from 8pm, and Cubana regular Guillermo Rozenhuler returning to bring his Brazilian bossa nova and Argentinean tango on 21 and 22 April, Cubana's will have the whole city swinging.

DETONATE FESTIVAL

30 MAY, NOTTINGHAM
DETONATE1.CO.UK

Regular promoters of underground music nights in Sheffield, Detonate are gearing up for their second annual festival over in Nottingham on 30 May. The city's biggest underground outdoor music festival is heading into the wilds of nature for the first time, promising an unforgettable day out amongst the lakes and woodland trails of Colwick Country Park.

Nas, performing his classic debut album *Illmatic*, headlines a solid line up of over 40 international artists, including Skepta, Mike Skinner, Congo Natty, Zed Bias, Dusky, Shy FX, Roni Size, Mumdance, Klashnekoff and David Rodigan, with loads more TBA. It's hardly surprising tickets are selling out fast. Get on it.

OPEN UP SHEFFIELD

2-4, 9-10 MAY
OPENUPSHEFFIELD.CO.UK

No, this isn't an invitation for everyone to be honest and 'open up' (although you should, of course). It's a free cultural event that invites you to meet 110 individual artists and craftspeople in their natural studio habitats across the city.

Open Up Sheffield has been going for 17 years and is set to be bigger than ever this year, with Juxtavoices choir performing atmospheric pieces across the locations on Sun 3 May. So keep your diary free for the Bank Holiday weekend (2-4 May) and weekend after (9-10 May), and in the meantime check out the Build Your Own Art Trail section on the website to personalise your route between locations.

YOU SHOULD VOTE

GOV.UK/REGISTER-TO-VOTE

You may be aware there is a General Election taking place on 7 May. You will only be able to make your voice heard on the day if you've registered to vote. Registration closes on 20 April, but signing up is easy. With national insurance number in hand, you can do it online in five minutes, and you can register for a postal vote whilst you're at it if you're so inclined.

Once you're registered, make sure you turn out on polling day. Not sure who to vote for? Think about the things that matter to you, have a look at voteforpolitics.org.uk, and come along to some Festival of Debate events, which run till the end of the month. See you at the polls.

SEVEN HILLS FILMS

SEVENHILLSFILMS.CO.UK

Like this here magazine, Seven Hills Films are all about connecting people with independent local producers and companies. They've recently started their 'Get Started. Get Seen.' campaign, to help get the message out about new start-ups and social enterprises who need that little bit of help in spreading the word about the work they do.

Seven Hills produce professional, high-quality, affordable showreels which highlight the unique qualities of whoever they're working with. Starting an independent business can be tough, and they're a great way to express what's particularly amazing about your work.

DIMITRI'S SPECIAL KEBABS

22 HICKMOTT ROAD
0114 266 6667

Is there anything better than an authentic kebab? Relatively new to the Sharrow Vale area, Dimitri's are busy serving up lovingly-made grilled foods with a Mediterranean edge. This takeaway offers a delicious array of home-style Mediterranean kebabs and Greek salads which are sure to have Sheffield's hoards of continental foodies salivating, with desserts and children's portions also available.

Head down to Hickmott Road for a taste of the Mediterranean, or alternatively have them deliver it right to your door. Open seven days a week while 10:30pm, Dimitri's are a welcome addition to Sheffield's varied offering of interesting takeaways.

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K.O.G

THU 02/04 ▶ THE HARLEY

DEMOB HAPPY

WED 10/04 ▶ THE ROCKING CHAIR

NAI HARVEST

FRI 24/04 ▶ THE HARLEY

HIGH HAZELS

THU 30/04 ▶ THE HARLEY

THE BOHICAS

TUE 26/04 ▶ THE HARLEY

**LEMURIA /
DADS**

WED 27/04 ▶ THE HARLEY

CRAZY P

SAT 30/05 ▶ QUEENS SOCIAL CLUB

WAXAHATCHEE

THU 18/06 ▶ THE HARLEY

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WED 1ST APR - £6 ADV - 7PM *#

ZOAX+ DEAD!
+ SILHOUETTES
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THU 2ND APR - £6 ADV - 6.30PM *

DEATHRITE

+ MASTIFF

FRI 3RD - SUN 5TH APR
£70 ADV - 1PM - 18+**RESISTANZ
FESTIVAL**

SEE WEBSITE FOR LINE UP

MON 6TH APR - £5 ADV - 6.30PM *#

SAMOANS+ FLY ON BYRD, FLY ON
+ SKYLIGERS

TUE 7TH APR - £10 ADV - 7PM *

OBEY THE BRAVE+ MALEVOLENCE
+ NAPOLEON
+ KUBLAI KHAN

THU 9TH APR - £8 ADV - 6.30PM *

LANDSCAPES+ THE TIDAL SLEEP
+ HALFSIGHT
+ FAR FROM HOME

FRI 10TH APR - £6 ADV - 6.30PM *#

ALLUSONDRUGS+ FALLS
+ OUR SAVING DAY
+ COSMIC DOGE
+ THIS STATE OF OURS

SAT 11TH APR - £6 ADV - 6.30PM *#

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+ 2 CARDS OF 25

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+ MORTALS
+ KUROKUMA
+ LACROTA

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+ DEFORMATION OF MAN
+ SONS OF DEATH VALLEY

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+ SYSTEM OF HATE
+ BOUQUET OF STEEL DJ'S
JAMIE HEADCHARGE & ZOWIE

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+ HIGH HOPES
+ STORY

FRI 24TH APR - £10 ADV - 6.30PM *#

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SUMMER**

+ BUCK & EVANS

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+ SUPPORT

FRI 1ST MAY - £5 ADV - 6.30PM *#

DEVILATOR+ IMMENSION
+ DEFORMATION OF MAN
+ LACROTA
+ A VISION OF FEAR

SAT 2ND MAY - £15 ADV - 12PM *#

FESTIVILE

SEE WEBSITE FOR LINE UP

TUE 5TH MAY - £6 ADV - 7PM *

SHIELDS

+ CARCER CITY

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KILLERS

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18/05 - CAPSIZE

22/05 - EUREKA MACHINES

23/05 - MALEFICE

29/05 - HEAVEN'S BASEMENT

30/05 - THE LURKERS

31/05 - THE LAFONTAINES

03/06 - FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND

05/06 - THE DISTANT NORTH

20/06 - DEADSET DREAM

26/06 - THE APPARITIONERS

27/06 - 999

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24/07 - ALABAMA 3

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LUCY SPRAGGAN

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26 MAY :: £7.00

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THE SHERLOCKS

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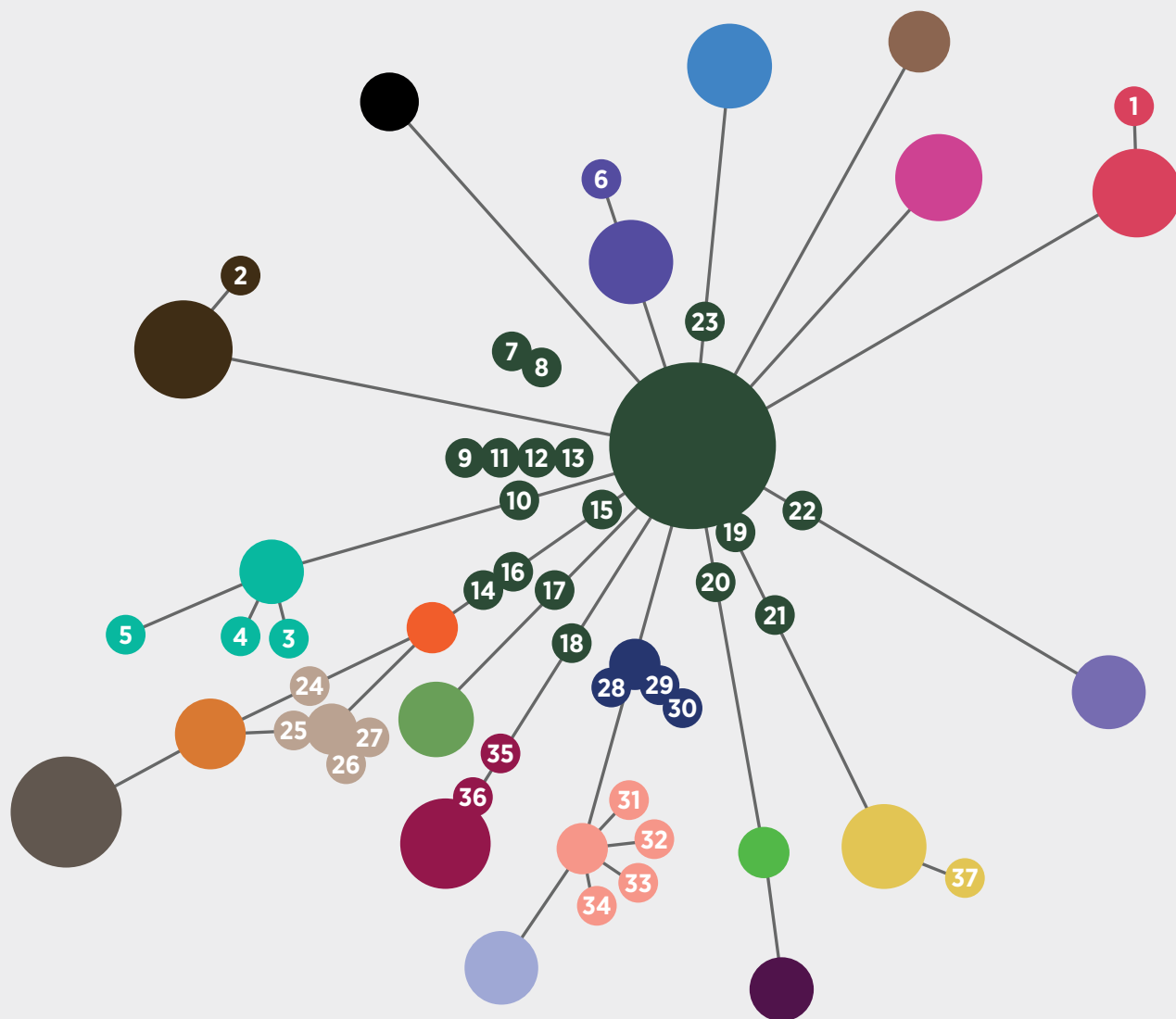


Magnus, 2013



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